NUMB. CXXXVII.

# The GUARDIAN.

*——— ſanctus haberi,*
*Juſtitiæque tenax: factis dictiſque mereris?*
*Agnoſco procerem ———* Juv.

*Tueſday, Auguſt* 18. 1713.

HORACE, *Juvenal*, *Boileau*, and indeed the greateſt Writers in almoſt every Age, have expoſed, with all the Strength of Wit and good Senſe, the Vanity of a Man's valuing himſelf upon his Anceſtors, and endeavoured to ſhow that true Nobility conſiſts in Virtue, not in Birth. With Submiſſion however to ſo many great Authorities, I think they have puſhed this matter a little too far. We ought in Gratitude to Honour the Poſterity of thoſe who have raiſed either the Intereſt or Reputation of their Country, and by whoſe Labours we our ſelves are more Happy, Wiſe or Virtuous than we ſhould have been without them. Beſides, naturally ſpeaking, a Man bids fairer for Greatneſs of Soul, who is the Deſcendant of worthy Anceſtors, and has good Blood in his Veins, than one who is come of an ignoble and obſcure Parentage. For theſe Reaſons I think a Man of Merit, who is derived from an Illuſtrious Line, is very juſtly to be regarded more than a Man of equal Merit who has no Claim to Hereditary Honours. Nay, I think thoſe who are indifferent in themſelves, and have nothing elſe to diſtinguiſh them but the Virtues of their Fore-fathers, are to be looked upon with a degree of Veneration even upon that account, and to be more reſpected than the common Run of Men who are of low and vulgar Extraction.

After having thus aſcribed due Honours to Birth and Parentage, I muſt however take Notice of thoſe who arrogate to themſelves more Honours than are due to them on this Account. The firſt are ſuch who are not enough ſenſible that Vice and Ignorance taint the Blood, and that an unworthy Behaviour degrades and diſennobles a Man, in the Eye of the World, as much as Birth and Family aggrandize and exalt him.

The ſecond are thoſe who believe a *new* Man of an elevated Merit is not more to be honoured than an inſignificant and worthleſs Man who is deſcended from a long Line of Patriots and Heroes. Or, in other Words, behold with Contempt a Perſon who is ſuch a Man as the firſt Founder of their Family was, upon whoſe Reputation they value themſelves.

But I ſhall chiefly apply my ſelf to thoſe whoſe Quality ſits uppermoſt in all their Diſcourſes and Behaviour. An empty Man of a great Family is a Creature that is ſcarce converſible. You read his Anceſtry in his Smile, in his Air, in his Eye-brow. He has indeed nothing but his Nobility to give Employment to his Thoughts. Rank and Precedency are the important Points which he is always diſcuſſing within himſelf. A Gentleman of this Turn begun a Speech in one of King *Charles*'s Parliaments: *Sir, I had the Honour to be born at a time* —— upon which a rough honeſt Gentleman took him up ſhort, *I would fain know what that Gentleman means,* &c.

(Price Two Pence.)

*Is there any one in this House that has not had the Honour to be born as well as himself?* The good Sense which reigns in our Nation has pretty well destroyed this starched Behaviour among Men who have seen the World, and know that every Gentleman will be treated upon a Foot of Equality. But there are many who have had their Education among Women, Dependants or Flatterers, that lose all the Respect, which would otherwise be paid them, by being too assiduous in procuring it.

My Lord *Froth* has been so educated in Punctilio, that he governs himself by a Ceremonial in all the ordinary Occurrences of Life. He measures out his Bow to the degree of the Person he converses with. I have seen him in every inclination of the Body, from a familiar Nod to the low Stoop in the Salutation-Sign. I remember five of us, who were acquainted with one another, met together one Morning at his Lodgings, when a Wag of the Company was saying, it wou'd be worth while to observe how he would distinguish us at his first Entrance. Accordingly he no sooner came into the Room, but casting his Eye about, *My Lord such a one*, says he, *your most humble Servant. Sir* Richard *your humble Servant. Your Servant Mr.* Ironside. *Mr.* Ducker, *how do you do? Hah!* Frank *are you there?*

There is nothing more easie than to discover a Man whose Heart is full of his Family. Weak Minds that have imbibed a strong Tincture of the Nursery, younger Brothers that have been brought up to nothing, Superannuated Retainers to a great House, have generally their Thoughts taken up with little else.

About some Years ago an Aunt of my own, by Name Mrs. *Martha Ironside*, who would never Marry beneath herself, and is supposed to have died a Maid in the Fourscorth Year of her Age. She was the Chronicle of our Family, and past away the greatest part of the last Forty Years of her Life in recounting the Antiquity, Marriages, Exploits and Alliances of the *Ironsides*. Mrs *Martha* conversed generally with a knot of old Virgins, who were likewise of good Families, and had been very cruel all the Beginning of the last Century. They were every one of 'em as proud as *Lucifer*, but had their Prayers twice a Day, and in all other respects were the best Women in the World. If they saw a fine Petticoat in Church, they immediately took to Pieces the Petticoat of her that wore it, and would lift up their Eyes and Hands at the Confidence of the saucy Minx, when they found she was an honest Tradesman's Daughter. It is impossible to describe the pious Indignation that would rise in them at the sight of a Man who lived plentifully on an Estate of his own getting. They were transported with Zeal beyond measure, if they heard of a young Woman's matching into a great Family upon account only of her Beauty, her Merit, or her Money. In short, there was not a Female within ten Miles of them that was in Possession of a Gold Watch, a Pearl Necklace, or a piece of *Mechlin* Lace, but they examined her Title to it. My Aunt *Martha* used to chide me very frequently for not sufficiently valuing my self. She would not Eat a Bit all Dinner-time, if at an Invitation she found she had been seated below her self; and would frown upon me for an Hour together, if she saw me give place to any Man under a Baronet. As I was once talking to her of a wealthy Citizen whom she had refused in her Youth, she declared to me with great warmth, that she preferred a Man of Quality in his Shirt to the richest Man upon the Change in a Coach and Six. She pretended, that our Family was nearly related by the Mother's Side to half a dozen Peers; but as they none of them knew any thing of the matter, we always kept it as a Secret among our selves. A little before her Death she was reciting to me the History of my Fore-fathers; but dwelling a little longer than ordinary upon the Actions of Sir *Gilbert Ironside*, who had a Horse shot under him at *Edgbill* Fight, I gave an unfortunate *Pish*, and asked, *What was all this to me?* upon which she retired to her Closet, and fell a Scribling for three Hours together, in which time, as I afterwards found, she struck me out of her Will, and left all she had to my Sister *Margaret*, a wheedling Baggage, that used to be asking Questions about her great Grandfather from Morning to Night. She now lies buried among the Family of the *Ironsides*, with a Stone over her, acquainting the Reader, that she died at the Age of Eighty Years, a Spinster, and that she was descended of the Ancient Family of the *Ironsides*——After which follows the Genealogy drawn up by her own Hand.

*This Paper is to be had of Mr. Nutt near the* Thatch'd-house *Tavern in St.* James's-street; *Mrs.* Bond *at* Charing-cross; *Mrs.* Bolter *and Mrs.* Dodd *near the* Temple-gate; *and Mr.* Round *in* Exchange-Ally.

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